

# NORTH BAY & AREA FENTANYL PATCH 4 PATCH POLICY

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## **NORTH BAY & AREA FENTANYL PATCH 4 PATCH RETURN POLICY**

This “*Fentanyl Patch 4 Patch*” return policy has been established for the North Bay & Area for the purpose of public education and awareness regarding the risks of fentanyl abuse and misuse. The policy is not meant to complicate the treatment of pain management, but to guarantee the responsible provision of such a potentially deadly drug in fentanyl. It is important to address the issue of disposal of fentanyl patches properly to avoid harm to others.

### **(1) PHYSICIANS RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- (a) **Patient Education:** Accurate and thorough client/family education is essential in promoting safe use of fentanyl patches. The physician will also caution the client/family to store the patches in a secure place, and to follow the procedure to keep track of the number of patches they have, to decrease the risk of accidental misuse by others.
- (b) **Prescriptions:** Physicians are cautioned not to write large numbers for pharmacists to dispense fentanyl patches. It is recommended that no more than **“10 fentanyl patches will be dispensed”** at once. (one patch every 72 hour x10 = 30 days). The pharmacist will use their discretion as to the amount of quantities to be dispensed (ie one month supply vs 3 month supply). Physicians will determine from their patients which **pharmacy and location** they utilize for their medication management. The physician must write on the prescription the **actual pharmacy and location** in which the prescription will be dispensed. Whenever, possible the prescription will be faxed to that pharmacy.
- (c) **Please note: when a patient does not return patches:** The pharmacist will notify the physician immediately in writing. The physician is responsible for acknowledging the pharmacy as soon as possible in writing. When patches **are not** return the pharmacist will dispense **one patch daily until:** the Pharmacist is able to contact the physician or the family physician contacts the pharmacy.

### **(2) PHARMACIST:**

- (a) **Patient Education:** Accurate and thorough client/family education is essential in promoting safe use of fentanyl patches. The pharmacy will caution the client/family to store the patches in a secure place, and to follow the procedure to keep track of the number of patches they have, to decrease the risk of accidental misuse by others.
- (b) **Counselling Client/Family on Fentanyl:**
- Attach a provided **“Fentanyl Return Blank Sheet”** to the bagged fentanyl prescription.

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- Remind the client/family to keep the used patch packaging when applying a new patch.
  - When changing the patch, the old patch has to be placed back in the original packaging to be returned to the pharmacy.
  - Tape the patch in the package to the “Fentanyl Return Sheet”, sign below, place the time and the date below.
  - Explain to the client/family that they **may not be able to receive more patches** if the current patches **are not** returned to the pharmacy.
  - Educate on the importance of the fentanyl return policy and the need for such a policy.
- (c) Count the fentanyl patches returned and inspect them for any damage or tampering.
- (d) Report all suspicious use or abuse to the physician and communicate this to the client/family.
- (e) **At any point** if the Pharmacist believes that a Criminal offense has occurred he/she shall cause a report to be forwarded to the local police agency.
- (f) When a patient does not return all their patches the pharmacist will initiate a contingent dispensing protocol.

### **(3) PHARMACY TECHNICIAN:**

- When filling a fentanyl prescription, place the comment “return to pharmacy, once used” at the end of the signature. ( Quick code – “fent”)
- When counting a fentanyl prescription, place a Fentanyl return blank sheet with the filled prescription to be attached by the pharmacist.
- Any questions regarding the fentanyl return policy refer the client/family to the pharmacist.

### **(4) Other**

- Refer all patients unaware of the fentanyl return policy to the pharmacist for proper counselling.
- Any questions regarding the fentanyl return policy refer the patient to the pharmacist.
- Destroy the returned patches daily using gloves and scissors. Place in environmental disposal bins.
- Patients that expire at home under the care of Allied Home Care such as CCAC, the Home Care staff are to return the Fentanyl patches and attached form to a pharmacy.
- Sudden death cases when Police attended the scene and secure the medications the procedure of disposal of fentanyl will be reviewed with the Police agencies.
- Evaluation of the process will be done in three months and all any and all issues are to be report to the Drug Strategy Committee for follow-up and action.